



Business plan
2020

Three key priorities

This business plan sets out three key priorities for our work in 2020.

1 Efficient and effective regulation

Our first priority is the efficient and effective delivery of our regulatory functions – in other words, our core purpose. It's how we keep patients safe and maintain stakeholders' confidence in us.

2 Delivering our corporate strategy

2020 is also the final year of our current *Corporate strategy 2018–2020*,¹ which sets out our ambition to shift the emphasis of our work from acting when things have gone wrong, to supporting all doctors in delivering the highest standards of care. In 2020, we'll continue to deliver changes that support this ambition, including outstanding commitments of our strategy.

3 Improving how we work

The third area of priority relates to our ways of working and the type of organisation we aspire to be. This includes our ongoing investments in people, equality, diversity and inclusion, and improving how we manage change and workload pressures.

¹ www.gmc-uk.org/about/how-we-work/corporate-strategy-plans-and-impact/corporate-strategy

Efficient and effective regulation

At the core of what we do are our regulatory functions:

- managing the UK medical register
- setting the standards for doctors
- overseeing medical education and training
- helping maintain and improve standards through revalidation
- investigating and acting on concerns about doctors.

Our work in numbers In 2020, we anticipate:

approaching **55,000** trainees and **45,000** trainers to understand their views on the quality of postgraduate medical education and training, through our national training surveys

responding to **600** ethical enquiries in relation to our standards for doctors

delivering up to **400** events across the UK and engaging with over **10,600** doctors and medical students through our Outreach team

taking further action in response to concerns in the form of up to **290** medical practitioners tribunals



visiting **11** new medical schools and rolling out a new quality assurance approach across four regions of the UK (London, Thames Valley, East of England, North West)

processing

21,500

applications from doctors seeking to join the UK medical register

processing

62,600

revalidation recommendations for doctors

reviewing

8,500

concerns raised with us

Delivering our corporate strategy

Our *Corporate strategy 2018–2020* sets out our vision to shift the emphasis of our work from acting when things have gone wrong, to supporting all doctors in delivering the highest standards of care. To do this, we focus our work on four strategic aims:

- supporting doctors in delivering good medical practice
- strengthening collaboration with our regulatory partners across the health services
- strengthening our relationship with the public and the profession
- meeting the changing needs of the health services across the four countries of the UK.

Our focus in 2020

During 2019, we published a range of research to understand how we can better support doctors in delivering the highest quality of patient care. The insight from this research has significant bearing on our priorities for 2020.

The research included: how to promote and maintain public confidence in the medical profession; *What it means to be a doctor*; and the *Independent review of gross negligence manslaughter and culpable homicide*. There's also research that focused on specific challenges within the environments that doctors practise in, including, including *Fair to refer?* and *Caring for doctors Caring for patients*.

We're committed to addressing the issues – about the environments in which doctors work and the impact of systems pressures on medical practice and patient care – raised in these reports.

Reflecting the learnings from these reports, we'll focus our work in 2020 on three key areas within our broader strategic aims:

- **environments** – influencing good practice and good care through good environments
- **medical workforce and leadership** – enabling an available, skilled, and fit-for-purpose workforce
- **regulatory development** – continuously improving and future-proofing what we do.

Key activities in 2020

Here are some of our key activities for 2020.

Working with others to address pressures on the profession to enable better patient care

The research we published in 2019 highlighted significant challenges faced by the profession. Better induction, fairness, leadership and ongoing support are all recurrent themes of these reviews that we will act on.

Our work in *Welcome to UK practice*, *Professional behaviours and patient safety*, and differential attainment already target some of these issues.

We'll explore our role in supporting doctors in their life-long learning and professional development, to improve their experience of work, wellbeing, commitment to their job, and ultimately, the quality of care for patients.

Continuing our work to develop and implement the Medical Licensing Assessment (MLA)

In 2020, we'll continue our work with medical schools and students to develop operational aspects of the MLA, working towards phased implementation from 2023.

The MLA will set a common threshold for safe practice, giving patients and employers greater confidence in doctors new to working in the UK, wherever they were educated or trained.

Collaborating with others to improve outcomes

This includes our *Local First* programme, which aims to make sure concerns about doctors are dealt with by the right organisation, at the right time.

It also includes our work to increase flexibility in postgraduate training for those who wish to transfer between specialties, and making sure there are sufficient safeguards for doctors returning to their training programme.

Developing a model for the regulation of medical associate professions

It's crucial for us to make sure our regulatory approach is flexible and future-proofed to allow physician associates and anaesthesia associates to maximise their contribution to patient care and the workforce. This will include working with others and planning how we can deliver our regulatory functions in an efficient and proportionate way.

Embedding learning from major public inquiries

We will focus on understanding and learning from public inquiries, which highlight opportunities for us to more effectively improve patient safety and care nationally.

Continuing to respond to changes in the UK's relationship with the EU and advocating for an appropriate legislative framework

We'll continue to register EEA and international doctors reflective of the UK's relationship with the EU, monitoring our existing contingency arrangements to make sure they remain fit-for-purpose and meet workforce needs.

We'll also work with the Government and others more broadly, influencing and supporting opportunities for legislative change – an essential for us to meet our ambitions of being a more flexible, proportionate and agile regulator.

Bringing together our Outreach team to meet the changing needs of the health services

Our Outreach team will be structurally aligned with the four countries of the UK and to the seven NHS regions within England. This will enable us to better understand local conditions and target our efforts and approaches to reflect local needs.

Improving how we work

Our ability to deliver our priorities effectively rests on our people, systems and ways of working.

We want to be an organisation people want to work for, where they are valued and are treated with respect and fairness. This emphasis reflects the lessons we have learnt from our research – doctors cannot thrive in environments that don't reflect these values and we wish to be an exemplar of how important it is to get this right.

Addressing staff survey results

Our most recent staff survey identified a lot of strengths. In particular, it highlighted that our people feel they are part of an organisation committed to supporting safe, high-quality care and to achieving high standards.

But we recognise there are some areas we can improve. Throughout 2020, members of the Senior Management Team will lead working groups to explore three key areas for improvement:

- workload pressures and wellbeing
- planning and managing change
- inclusivity, openness and transparency.

Investing in people

The health and wellbeing of our people is of paramount importance to us. In 2020, we'll work towards the Investors in People Health and Wellbeing award. This will build on the silver accreditation status we achieved in 2018. It's part of our ongoing commitment to our people and our journey towards gold accreditation.

We're also investing in more new roles within our investigations processes, education functions, registration assessments team, and key enabling functions, including human resources and information access. As well as helping to manage workload pressures, increasing the size of our teams will enable us to respond to significant increases in registration applications.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our new Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum will be considering how we can embed a broad range of views in our work. This, coupled with our efforts to build our inclusivity as an employer, will help us to be more reflective of the public we seek to protect and the professions we regulate.

A new approach to planning and resourcing our work

From 2021, we'll be implementing a three-year rolling business plan and budget. This will give us a longer-term view of what we're doing and why, so we can be more responsive and flexible in our approach to work planning. It will also enable us to routinely reprioritise our work, so we can maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of what we do and better manage workload pressures on ourselves and stakeholders.

Beyond 2020

During 2020, we'll continue to pursue our strategic aims alongside our core regulatory functions and our work with others to achieve positive change within the UK's healthcare systems.

Crucial to our work is understanding and adapting to the external environment, anticipating challenges and opportunities for the professions we regulate. Throughout the year, we'll continue to use data and insight to inform the type of organisation we want to be. And we'll set out how we're going to realise that aspiration in our next corporate strategy, which will run from 2021 to 2025.

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